

What we claim is:

1. Apparatus for processing image data, comprising processing means, storage means, display means and stylus-like manually operable input means, wherein
 - 5 said processing means is configured to perform functions upon image data in response to an operator manually selecting a function from a function menu;
 - 10 said processing means responds to a first user-generated input command so as to display a plurality of function gates at a cursor position; movement of the stylus-like manually operable input means so as to move said cursor through one of said function gates results in a related menu being displayed; and
 - 15 manual selection of a function from said displayed menu results in the selected function being performed upon said image data.
2. Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said manually operable input means is a stylus and a touch-tablet combination.
- 20 3. Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein a first user-generated input command is generated in response to keyboard operation.
4. Apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said keyboard operation

involves activation of a spacebar.

5. Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein four function gates form a substantially circular device.

5

6. Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein six function gates form a substantially circular device.

7. Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the function gates form
10 a substantially quadrilateral device.

8. Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said menus relate to functions applicable to image data processing.

15 9. Apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said image data processing functions relate to compositing and editing image frames.

10. A method of selecting a function via a graphical user interface for receiving input commands, wherein

20 in response to a first input command, a selection device is displayed at a cursor position; said selection device identifies a plurality of function types at selected positions, each having an associated displayable menu;

in response to a second input command, a cursor is moved over one
of said positions; and

having moved the cursor over a function type position the aforesaid
menu associated with said position over which the cursor has been moved is
5 displayed.

11. A method according to claim 10, wherein a first selection device
or a second selection device is displayed dependent upon the current state of
operations being performed by an operator.

10

12. A method according to claim 11, wherein a schematic-related
device is displayed when the operator is using a schematic view and a player-
related device is displayed when an operator is viewing a player view.

15

13. A method of supplying input data to a computer system,
comprising the steps of
issuing a first input command to call up a graphical user interface in
which a plurality of gates surround a cursor position; and
in response to a second input command, moving said cursor through
20 one of said gates; and
supplying input data determined by which of said gates the cursor is
moved through.

14. A method according to claim 13, wherein four gates are displayed in said graphical user interface in a substantially circular configuration.

5 15. A computer-readable medium having computer-readable instructions executable by a computer such that, when executing said instructions, said computer will perform the steps of:

 responding to a first user-generated input command so as to display a plurality of function gates at a cursor position;

10 responding to movement of manually operable input means so as to move said cursor through one of said function gates and displaying a menu in response to said cursor movement; and

 responding to manual selection of a function from said displayed menu so as to perform said function upon image data.

15 16. A computer-readable medium having computer-readable instructions according to claim 15, wherein said cursor moves thru one of said function gates in response to manual operation of a stylus upon a touch-tablet.

20 17. A computer-readable medium having computer-readable instructions according to claim 14, such that when executing said instructions a computer will display four function gates that define a substantially circular

shape.

18. A computer-readable medium having computer-readable
instructions according to claim 15, such that when executing said instructions
5 a computer will display a menu at a screen position related to the relative
positions of its respective gate.